

JOINT CAPITAL PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
February 26, 2010

The meeting was called to order at 8:35 a.m. in the Town Room, Town Hall.

Present: Kathleen Anderson (until 9:15 am), Carol Gray (after 8:55 am), Sarah McKee (after 9 am), Kay Moran, Stephanie O’Keeffe, Doug Slaughter, Diana Stein

Absent: Catherine Sanderson

Others Present: Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director John Musante; Superintendent of Public Works Guilford Mooring; Police Chief Scott Livingstone; Assistant and Interim Fire Chief Lindsay Stromgren; Deputy Holyoke Fire Chief Walter Nelson, who will be Amherst’s new Fire Chief next month; and Walter Wolnik

Agenda
PUBLIC WORKS

Mooring distributed copies of the Department of Public Works capital budget request for FY 11. It includes a $\frac{3}{4}$ ton pickup with plow (replacing a 2001 vehicle) and a one-ton dump truck with plow (replacing a 1998 vehicle). His top priorities, other than the usual \$500,000 in Chap. 90 funds for road repairs, are:

1. \$30,000 for an inventory of parts to repair traffic lights as soon as they’re broken or damaged. For the past two years vendors have taken 1-3 months to supply needed parts, delaying repairs needed for safety. If vehicle crashes cause the damage, vehicle insurance eventually reimburses repair costs to the town.
2. \$18,000 to upgrade electrical supply to the Town Common. Some circuits are failing. This would bring all up to code, so that events on the common can continue to use electricity when needed.
3. \$38,000 for an asphalt recycler that makes useable mix for filling potholes from old asphalt. The resulting mix would last longer than cold patch. A second payment of \$38,000 would be required in FY 12. This will save the annual cost of purchasing new asphalt from a plant (\$30,000 last year) and save money and time now spent to drive to and from asphalt plants. Funds will come from state Chapter 90 money dedicated to road repair. Gray asked whether such a machine could be used regionally. Mooring said Northampton already has its own, the machine he has in mind is the right size for Amherst, and sharing the machine would be difficult since every community would need it at the same time of year.
4. \$2.5 million in FY 11 and \$2 million in FY 12 to deal with an extensive backlog of road resurfacing and repairs throughout town. Major routes would get priority; Mooring will provide the DPW’s list of roads needing work. Gray said she’d like to see more bike paths and sidewalks built; Mooring said those take more time, since expanding road width to accommodate sidewalks and bike paths can be extremely complex. If the money is raised through a bond issue, debt service in FY 12 would be \$450,000, less in each of nine succeeding years. Other funding possibilities are a

debt-exclusion override vote, increasing the percent of the tax levy used for capital, or finding savings in the operating budget.

POLICE

Livingstone said his department's top priority is \$140,000 for four new cruisers, continuing an annual replacement schedule. Livingstone said they recently sold one of the replaced vehicles to the Pelham Fire Department because it had 40,000 less miles on it than theirs. Mileage on the four old cruisers being replaced currently is: Cruiser B: 93,400; Cruiser D: 69,800; Cruiser I: 77,000; and Cruiser L: 94,000, and all are estimated to be over 100,000 by the beginning of FY 11. If not replaced, they're likely to require expensive front-end and engine repairs, Livingstone said. Asked if any of the cars that were to be replaced had had any such mechanical problems, Livingstone said he did not know specifics regarding repairs of these vehicles. New cruisers would have 8-cylinder engines, necessary to support electronics (blue lights, radios, computers). The current fleet of marked and unmarked cruisers includes somewhat more efficient 6-cylinder vehicles, but they're too small for the tallest officers, he said. Gray asked that hybrid vehicles be considered. Livingstone replied that police will continue looking into the possibility but have not yet discovered a hybrid vehicle that would work as a cruiser.

The second police request is \$10,000 for two in-car digital video/audio recording systems. Five cruisers currently have older analog video recorders; two are broken and repairs are very costly. Automatic video and audio recording of all motor vehicle stops protects the public and police, Livingstone said.

FIRE

Stromgren said his department's top priority is \$190,000 to replace a 2001 ambulance with more than 115,000 miles on it. The money will come from the Ambulance Fund.

Second priority is \$14,000 to replace the computerized fueling system at North Station, which is 15 years old and breaks down frequently, with no new parts available. School department and all town vehicles except police and DPW get fuel here. The system provides security for the fueling site and records who uses how much fuel.

Third is \$15,000 to replace one of the three thermal-imaging cameras bought 10 years ago with donated funds, which are beginning to break down. New models are smaller and lighter, with better image quality. The cameras allow firefighters to "see" people through dense smoke and to locate fire hidden inside walls. Stromgren said fundraising for such a large amount could be hard, and no grants are currently available to pay for this.

Fourth is \$55,000 to replace five-year-old protective gear for the call and student forces. Due to age and use, thermal layers and fabric of coats, pants, boots and helmets break down after five years. No grants are currently available to pay for this.

Fifth is \$95,000 to rehabilitate the 22-year-old aerial ladder truck, which would extend its useful life 10 years. Replacing it now would cost \$1 million. First proposed in the FY 08 capital budget, this was not done due to failure of the override and has been pushed forward each year since then. Stromgren said it could wait another year, but will almost certainly need to be done in FY 12.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:28 a.m.

Kay Moran, acting clerk